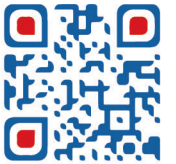


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METRO

Modern beauty

Wang Zhijie's portraits incorporate all the classical symbols of beauty: plump breasts, slim waists, porcelain skin, soft hair, ruby lips and big eyes. But his caricatures of modern women are a comment on 30 years of economic prosperity.

His creations show that Chinese women are not — assuming they ever were — “easy targets.” Behind each innocent face is a pair of cunning eyes that's looking out for Number 1.

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北京青年报
BEIJING YOUTH DAILY

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Mother's trial a reminder of the shackles on migrants

By Zhao Hongyi

The trial of Cao Manling, the mother who attempted to counterfeit documents to enroll her six-year-old son in public school, began last week in Changping People's Intermediate Court.

Cao and her husband have been living in Beijing since 2003.

Although they came to the capital to build a better life, the birth of their son was a hard reminder about the absurd difficulty of integrating into the Chinese capital.

Maze of papers

At six years old, Cao Manling's son should have been learning to read in a Changping District elementary school.

Only five pieces of paper were keeping him out of class: his parents' Work Certificates, Labor Licenses, Temporary Residence Permits, No-Guarantee Certificate and the family's household registration book.

Cao was in tears throughout her trial and unwilling to speak to the media.

"She has a lot of pressure in her heart," said her husband, who refused to be named. "I'll accept that this was a lesson for us, but I worry the scandal will further damage our son's future."

The court said it would postpone sentencing until a later date.

Forged documents

Cao's family lives in the



Cao Manling is awaiting sentencing for a forged seal.

BQB Photo

Huilongguan Community on the city's northwest side. They encountered their first roadblocks to enrollment earlier this year.

Local officials instructed Cao to return to Shandong Province to prepare the necessary certificates and bring them to Beijing in two weeks.

Her No-Guarantee Certificate – a standardized document that is anything but standard – was deemed invalid because it did not follow the format expected by Beijing schools. Officials told Cao to return to Shandong again and obtain the certificate in the correct format.

The certificate was rejected again, and the Huilongguan Community government declined to hear her appeal.

Next, Cao and her husband were blocked because their Temporary Residence Permits, while issued during the last six months by the local police station, did not "clearly say when they were issued."

The Huilongguan Community government again asked Cao to return with the correct documents.

With the deadline for enrollment approaching, Cao landed on an idea.

Cao hired a professional engraver to fabricate a seal bearing the identity of her village government in Shandong Province. Together with a new Temporary Residence Permit, the cost was 100 yuan.

Beijing police arrested Cao when she returned to pick up the seal the next day.

Lingering effects

In court, Cao said she and her husband had dropped out of school after middle school. They believed education would give their son a better life.

They have since sent their son back to Shandong Province to attend school. Neither has seen the boy in nine months.

"I've raised him since he was born. I've never been separated from him for so long," Cao said. "My mother just had a mastectomy and is undergoing chemotherapy for the remaining cancer. My father is too old and weak to look after my son."

While Cao waits for final sentencing, many are asking why education is a game so

hopelessly stacked against urban migrants.

Forty years of economic growth have attracted many poor rural workers to urban boom towns. But even if they appear to be a part of urban life, arcane registration procedures prevent them from ever becoming true residents.

The government estimates that more than 600 million rural workers have moved into the cities during the past four decades. Another 300 million are expected to enter urban areas in the next decade.

Land reforms following the revolution divided Chinese citizens into two classes: urban and rural.

"Today, the rural label has become a shackle around their necks," said Wang Yichang, deputy of the National People's Congress.

Wang is calling on the central government to unchain China's migrant workers from the countryside.

While the central government seems to have a similar goal, it is urging rural residents to move to the second- and third-tier cities rather than Beijing and Shanghai, which are struggling with growing pollution and severe water scarcity.

But business opportunities lie in the big cities.

Finding a way to draw jobs away from the boom towns will be the central government's next major challenge.

Until then, families like Cao's may be doomed to fall through the cracks.

Subway to slash traffic with a price hike

By Zhao Hongyi

The flat rate subway system that lets Beijingers travel 620 kilometers on 12 lines for 2 yuan may be on its way out, say city officials.

A recently proposed flexible pricing system would substantially increase the cost of taking the city's subway lines if it is approved after a hearing.

But the price hike is less about increasing revenue than controlling passenger flow.

Beijing is still in the middle of a subway boom that began in the years before the Beijing Olympic Games. Each year, two to three subway lines are com-

pleted and enter operation.

To encourage people to use the subway, Beijing adopted a fixed rate system that allowed trips of unlimited distance for only 2 yuan.

The city's lines 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 13 and 16 are currently in operation, as are many short lines that connect to these main routes. The municipal government has gradually increased its line subsidies from 15 billion yuan in 2008 to 18.3 billion yuan in 2012.

But the sheer number of passengers is complicating subway maintenance.

Line 10 has experienced malfunctions during the peak

hours of operation, and Lines 1, 2 and 13 have had to add platform shields to prevent fatal falls. Subway management said it would install 3,100 proximity detectors to monitor the safety of passengers.

"The low price is what stimulates the flow of passengers," said Ning Bing, principal of Beijing Jiaotong University. "This has brought a huge problem to both the subway management and municipal government."

Experts have proposed using 2 yuan as a baseline price for the first six stations, with the cost increasing by 1 yuan every three stations

after. The subway would charge a maximum fee of 8 to 10 yuan.

The pricing system is modeled on the subway strategy used in Guangzhou, Tianjin, Shanghai and other Chinese cities.

Shanghai charges 3 yuan for the first 6 kilometers traveled with an increase of 1 yuan for every 10 kilometers after. Guangzhou charges 2 yuan for the first 4 kilometers and 1 yuan for every 12 kilometers after.

But some people insist that the rate hike is a money grab, and that the Beijing subway should find other ways to earn more money.

Recently, real estate developers have started hiring people to deliver their advertisements on the subway while it is in operation. The government has asked the subways to halt such illegal ad distribution.

There are also plans for more security checks at subway station entrances. The Tian'anmen east and west stations have extended their security checks to include both luggage and passengers.

Reports say Tiantongyuan, Xi'erqi and Longze will have similar checkpoints. All the stations have severe traffic from 7 to 9 am and 4 to 6 pm.

Care of aging parents may be up to the community



By Liu Xiaochen

China began its demographic shift to an aging society in 2000 – a problem exacerbated by rapid development.

Official figures posit that a quarter of the population will be more than 60 years old by 2030: that's 8.5 percent more than the world average.

The number of elders left behind as young men and women migrate to the big city to work is growing. Finding ways to care for this growing demographic is one of the country's most pressing social issues.

Existing options

China has long believed that raising children is a way to protect yourself in old age, and that relationship is backed by more than mere traditional sayings.

National law mandates that parents provide care and education for their children and that children care for their aging parents in turn. Broadly speaking, this "care for the aging" boils down to providing a roof and resources. In China, family support is understood as the task of the son.

But what do you do when your child moves away and has no money?

For empty nesters, the only option is a nursing home with the community as a fallback.

CCTV reported that both private and public nursing homes in big cities are running out of beds. Beijing First Welfare House and Shanghai First Social Welfare House have waiting lists of several thousand people.

In Tianjin, there are 160,000 men and women in need of such institutional support and fewer than 20,000 beds available.

To solve this problem the government is appealing for increased community support.

Community support, an intermediate form of care, allows aged people to remain at home while being provided with housekeeping, food delivery and daily nursing visits. The familiar surroundings are believed to provide a better quality of life and spiritual comfort.

In China, such care facilities are relatively new. Several big cities have implemented their own pilot programs.

Money the big limiter

The parents of the first one-child generation are getting old, and more and more young couples are struggling to find a way to support four aging parents.

The pressure is causing China's nursing home market to stratify to meet different economic conditions.

Cuncao Chunhui Nursing



Inflation and long waiting lists leave many elders without adequate care.

CFP Photos



Food is not one of the complaints at most nursing homes.

Home, the first private nursing home in Chaoyang District, has a good reputation with residents due to its location. The hospital offers only 97 beds, and most of the occupants are more than 80 years old.

Occupants are required to pay 4,000 yuan per month to maintain their place – generally within the means of many Beijing families.

"Old people have to move past traditional ideas about nursing homes. Many can be quite comfortable," said Yi Jun,

and 80-year-old woman whose two daughters live in Beijing. "We have to learn to enjoy our later years on our own."

"The nursing home's food suits my taste. The medical conditions and service are fairly good," said a 73-year-old resident surnamed Song. "The home tries to pair up people who comes from similar backgrounds or who share interests so that we have someone to talk with."

But care costs are rising faster than pensions, leaving

many aging parents unable to find an acceptable – and affordable – nursing home.

Zhang is a retired employee from a nursing institution. She has been looking for a nursing home with her husband but has yet to find one. Although one near Heping Xiqiao was quite nice, its 5,000 yuan per month cost was more than her family could bear.

"Nursing homes located downtown are either too expensive or have impossible waiting lists," said a 72-year-old woman surnamed Tong. "Publicly operated nursing homes like Beijing First Social Welfare House are nice and affordable, but they have more than 9,000 people waiting for the next bed."

Tong's monthly pension is only 2,000 yuan and her child earns little.

"It's just not something we can afford," she said.

Government policies

According to the first national strategy seminar for aging held this October, there

will be more than 79 million people dying alone by 2050. Singles and empty nesters will account for more than half.

The revelation attracted surprisingly little attention.

In September, the government issued a new policy to accelerate the development of its aging support services.

In October, Beijing introduced a series of policies and measures, including strengthening the role of community service centers in home-based care, reform of governmental support institutions, and encouraging social support groups.

Li Hongbing, deputy director of the Beijing Civil Affairs Bureau, said the government plans to open care centers with 50 beds and complete functions in 322 communities before 2016.

Beijing also plans to encourage enterprises, social organizations and individuals to operate supporting institutions through contracting, leasing, joint ventures and joint-stock companies.



Chinese Girl 12
Mixed media on canvas



Chinese Girl 18
Mixed media on canvas



Chinese Girl 3
Mixed media on canvas



Chinese Girl 16
Mixed media on canvas

Chasing the modern

By Zhao Hongyi

This winter, Asian Art Works Beijing is presenting Wang Zhijie's solo exhibition of *Linger in Beauty*.

Each of his portraits incorporate classical symbols: plump breasts, slim waists, porcelain skin, soft hair, ruffled skirts, and tempting eyes with heavy makeup. Wang's reality hides a fantasy that gives viewers a hazy feeling at first sight.

The cartoon-like renderings of Chinese women reflect 30 years of prosperity.

Wang skillfully blends his understanding of art with outstanding technique to create caricatures of China's young generation.

The availability and new materials has influenced the way in which they view contemporary culture. Some of his women assert themselves with dangerous uniforms. Luxury decorations in the periphery of each painting reflect a modern life.

Although each appears to live a modern life and enjoy material wealth, they are innocent faces and fearless eyes.

The paintings show that Wang understands the modern age as a time when one where charm is a license for rebellion.

The girls created by Wang's brush are sexy, cunning and understanding. They know how to apply make up, dress well and act sexy – all to control men.

In some ways, Wang's art comes off as a panicked warning that China's young women are "easy targets." They have their own goals in marriage or cohabitation.

But Wang accepts material temptation and tries to put a positive message in his works. "All you can do is accept materialism – but don't let it control you," he says.

If you can't change the world, the best thing you can do is be a part of it.

Asian Art Works

Add: 798 Road, 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District, Beijing 100015

Tel: 5762 6338

Website: asianartworks.net

Duration: Through January 19, 2014

Critical exhibition shows 'love' of a li



Lu Xun Octopus



Pipi



Klaus Kinski in His Youth - I



Lu Xun Avoid Evil Spirit



Jiang Nan
Photos provided by yestergallery.com



Klaus Kinski in His Youth - II

By Zhao Hongyi

When talking about love, most people think of the relationship between men and women. But Sheng Tianhong is a man wholly devoted to painting.

Sheng was born in Zhejiang Province in 1973 and graduated from the Chinese Central Academy of Fine Arts.

At the age of 24, he moved to Dusseldorf, Germany, to travel and develop his career.

"This is an era of mass information," Sheng says. "There are just too many pictures you can find online. Pictures taken by others have become the new reality, but they only capture as much of the experience as a quick sketch."

Love in the Digital Age collects Sheng's best works of the last 10 years from Germany, Northern Europe and China. The inspiration comes from his impossibly random encounters.

His *Naughty Pipi* painting is of a Swedish girl he met while traveling in the country. The surrounding childish toys and the gun in Pipi's hands is Sheng's of backhanding the reality on the mental health of modern women.

In *Boy*, he depicts a silent young man with large, expressive eyes, showing how modern society is changing the way we see the world.



Norway Dead

beauty

Girls:
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Lu Xun, the Chinese Communist Party's beloved writer for the working class, is equally criticized. Sheng's paintings depict Lu Xun as a smart octopus and a tool for avoiding evil spirits.

Canvas is the only consistent material in Sheng's works: what he puts on it ranges from charcoal to oils, acrylics and more.



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But there's something more significant about Sheng's solo exhibition.

Sheng represents a new wave of Chinese artists who have been "set free" by spending a decade abroad. The turmoil reflected in his paintings may be a sign that the honest artists are fed up with modern society and the wholly derailed art market.

These new artists are looking for liberation and a breath of air to blast out the waves of pretenders who still dominate China's galleries and claim the lion's share of sales.

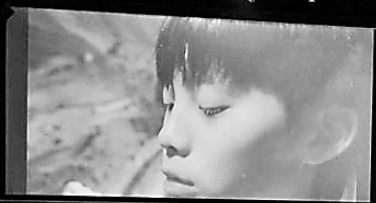
Love in the Digital Age
Where: Room 601, Unit 3, Yonghe Garden, 3 Dong Binhe Road, Andingmenm, Dongcheng District
Tel 8422 1726, 8422 1030
Website: ayegallery.com
Open: 10 am-6 pm, Tuesday to Sunday
Duration: Through February 15, 2014

Chinese Girl 1
Mixed media on canvas

Photos provided by Asian Art Work

Ping Pong practices contemporary culture exchange

Photos provided by Wang Chong and Theatre du Reve Experimental



Alison Friedman (middle) in a post-performance discussion with L.A. Theatre Works in Shanghai

Photo provided by Alison Friedman

By Annie Wei

Many foreign students come to China each year, but few are like Alison Friedman.

After studying, working and living in Beijing for a decade, Friedman decided to stay in China to establish Ping Pong Productions (PPP), her company devoted to “bringing China and the world together through the performing arts.”

Unlike most culture companies that focus on the one-time business of selling tickets, Ping Pong focuses on fostering deeper cultural exchange.

“The great value of art is its ability to show diversity,” Friedman said. When people talk about American culture, they think of McDonalds, Starbucks, Apple, Hollywood and Disney. “Performances can reveal other aspects of American history and society, such as the docudrama we toured called *TOP SECRET: The Battle for the Pentagon Papers* (the classified history of US involvement in Vietnam).”

The drama, first presented in China in 2011 in cooperation with L.A. Theater Works, tells the story of *The Washington Post*’s decision to publish a study about the Pentagon Papers. It was an important moment in US history, and the

subsequent trial pitted the public’s right to know against the government’s need for secrecy.

Cultural exchange is a two-way street, and Friedman is engaged in similar projects abroad.

While many foreigners’ understand Chinese culture as being Peking Opera and acrobatics, she aims to show the country’s contemporary works abroad and build an international audience for Chinese creatives. Part of that is giving young Chinese artists the opportunity to perform in leading world theaters.

“Young and talented artists don’t have established financial support mechanisms in China,” said Friedman. Many culture companies prioritize commercial results, and even government-funded theaters will ask performers to cover venue rental and split ticket revenues.

One of PPP’s main projects is TAO Dance Theater, which it has sent abroad to famous theaters like Lincoln Center Festival (US), Sydney Opera House (Australia) and Sadler’s Wells (UK).

PPP handles TAO’s management and production.

“Founder Tao Ye’s physical vocabulary and aesthetic is unique, not just in China but anywhere,” Friedman said.

Treating dance as a visual medium devoid of narrative, Tao expands the body’s limitations and surprises the audience.

CVNC Online Arts Journal North Carolina said TAO Dance Theater “confounds and amazes. It is rare to be able to say, ‘I’ve never seen anything quite like it,’ and really mean it.”

Friedman met Tao while working at Beijing Modern Dance Company.

“Tao is very creative and we recognized a like-mindedness in each other during our early conversations at BMDC,” Friedman said. Both share the same ideas about dance and art.

PPP helped TAO Dance Theater to book performances in nine cities this year: it has another 11 scheduled for 2014.

Another Chinese artist with which PPP is working is Wang Chong, the artistic director of Beijing-based performance group Theatre du Reve Experimental.

Wang’s work challenges dated stage techniques to bring the audience a fresh experience

“Wang has a very clear voice and direction that he’s developing,” Friedman said.

Founded in 2010, PPP has

grown to employ four full-time staff and three part-timers this year. Friedman has to fly to different cities – sometimes different countries – for work at least once a month.

The most difficult part of starting her own company was the beginning: “to build something out of nothing,” she said.

“Well, not exactly nothing,” she said.

In the last 12 years, Friedman prepared as much as she could: she learned fluent Chinese, applied for the Fulbright scholarship to study contemporary performing arts, built media experience at China Radio International and networked with leading artists, art companies and musicians like Tan Dun.

In 2009, she went to Washington DC for a nine-month fellowship in art management at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

“I started the company as something project-based,” Friedman said. At the beginning, she did not have an office or hire any fulltime employees. The humble beginning laid a solid foundation for growth.

For more information about Ping Pong Productions or its projects, visit pingpongarts.org.



Tao Dance Theater’s “2”

Photo by Lars Ake-Stomfelt

Christmas shopping guide for Chinese gifts



Visitors to the store are offered fresh tea.



Fair-trade store Slow Lane is hidden in the Shijia Hutong.

By Annie Wei

Slow Lane is a lovely shop and teahouse in the Shijia Hutong near Chaoyang South Street. It mainly deals in handmade curios that support fair trade.

We loved its delicate ceramic teapots, cups and holders.

Its latest tea set is ideal for travelers who are hooked on the leaf. The teapot, three cups, heater and a water reservoir (more than 1,000 yuan) fit together neatly in a cotton bag (280 yuan). The bag has pockets for storing different teas.

The set is also a good gift for housewarming parties.

The shop has many specialty teas from different regions, including leaves eaten by the Hani ethnic group in Yunnan Province (80 yuan). Its teas come wrapped in thin green paper and taste fresh and slightly sour.

The shop assistant is also a tea master and serves visitors with a good cup of tea.

We like the shop's organically dyed clothing and scarves. Two weeks ago, the shop held an organic dye workshop with Huang Ronghua, the country's leading plant dye expert. It was impressive for many people who didn't realize the plants used for food and medicine can also be used to produce environmentally-friendly clothing.

Slow Lane also carries small brands like Khunu, a yak product from the Himalayas that helps nomads on the Tibetan plateau.

There is also a small clothing brand Wusetu that sells natural clothing in traditional styles. Its products are mainly sold abroad with only a few sold at Slow Lane. The texture is comfortable: light and yet warm.

Slow Lane

Where: 13 Shijia Hutong, Dongcheng District

Open: 10 am – 8 pm

Tel: 6522 7770



The store has quality teas from the provinces of Fujian, Guangxi and Yunnan.



Slow Lane has many beautiful ceramics.



Plants can create some impressive colors.



Tea set for travellers



Khunu yak blanket



Clothing made with organic dyes Photos by Wei Ying

Authentic Hunan with a modern twist

Dining Out

By Annie Wei

The Hunan restaurant by North Fourth Ring Road is known by the romantic Chinese name Chixin Bugai, which means "everlasting passionate devotion."

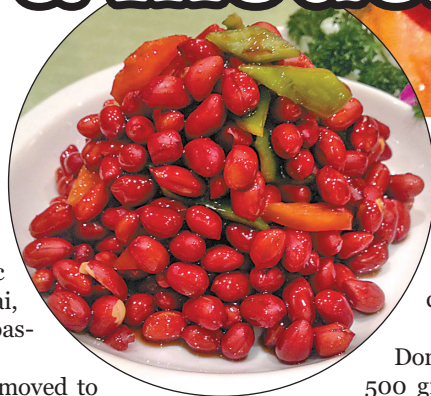
Shu Yuran, the owner, moved to Beijing to start the restaurant when she was 24 years old. The name was intended as an inspiring reminder that she had bought into her dream.

The restaurant quickly built a reputation as a trendy place for dates. The menu – while authentic – includes many romantic names and the kitchen staff is keen to arrange its plates in heart shapes.

The fruity yam (28 yuan) starter comes with four heart-shaped balls of mashed yam topped with strawberry, mango and blueberry jam. Pickled cabbage and fried glutinous rice balls with sesame filling (29 yuan) is another good pick for dates, since the Chinese name of the dish is "love makes your heart sweet."

The restaurant moved to its new location from Tuanjiehu five years ago. The new location has more private rooms, making it a good pick for anyone treating family or friends.

Recommended dishes include salted egg yolk baked rice crust (25 yuan), spicy fried cauliflower (28 yuan), which comes in a generous portion, and stewed ginger and peppered



Vinegar peanuts, 16 yuan

chicken feet (48 yuan).

Our top pick was Dongting lake fish (38 yuan per 500 grams). The hotpot arrives with two half-cooked tails topped with peppers and simmered. It tastes tender, fresh and spicy.

Its recently added dish of prune spare ribs and chicken wings (58 yuan), a plate of four decent pieces of ribs and wings, is also popular. The vinegar peanuts (16 yuan), a plate of fried peanuts soaked in aged vinegar and topped with sugar, is another tasty choice.

Tofu and Chinese cabbage soup (18 yuan) is delicious too. The soup is made of chicken and pig feet and stewed long enough to be creamy.

Farm-style beef and pork with peppers (38 yuan) is a Hunan classic, with stir-fried long green peppers and thin-sliced meat seasoned with garlic, black beans, soy sauce and rice wine. This restaurant makes the dish using five kinds of peppers that it adjusts according to your level of endurance.

Chixin Bugai

Where: 4-3 Anhui Li, Huizhong Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 11 am – 3 pm; 5-10 pm

Tel: 6493 7666



Stewed ginger and peppered chicken feet, 48 yuan

Fried glutinous rice balls with sesame filling, 29 yuan

Great brunch at Niajo



Mashed potatoes with Spanish ham and poached eggs



Tuna with pistachio praline and apple

By Annie Wei

Spanish restaurant Niajo at Nali Patio is serving a brunch set menu priced 186 yuan.

The set includes a glass of house wine, a cocktail, cava, a soft drink or coffee – an extra 150 yuan will upgrade that to unlimited wine and beer.

Niajo provides every table with a free appetizer of bread and four sauces: tomato, berry, smashed pork and olive.

We ordered the mashed potatoes with Spanish ham and poached eggs, Bluefin tuna with pistachio praline and apple and chocolate cake.

Dishes came in generous proportions. If you prefer something lighter, choose the vegetable paella for a main course instead of the roast chicken leg with potatoes.

We also liked its bean soup, which quickly warmed the stomach.

The restaurant recently redecorated, tossing its Spanish countryside look for something more chic and modern. The hardwood tables and dark sofa are still cozy and comfortable.

Niajo

Where: Floor 3, Nali Patio, 81 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: noon – 3 pm

Tel: 5208 6052

Made from the Market

Deliciousness delivered from Chaoshan

By Annie Wei

It can be tough to find the energy to dine out when winter is at its coldest. But the magic of modern logistics makes it possible to enjoy fresh food at home.

This week, we found a Taobao store that specializes in Chaoshan cuisine. It sends marinated fresh clams, oysters and other vacuum-packed delicacies right to your door.

Chaoshan food uses quality ingredients and a variety of cooking techniques that retain the flavor of each.

The cuisine emphasizes seafood, as the region borders China's southeastern coast. Seafood goes bad quickly once moved inland, so Chaoshan people have a tradition of preserving extra catches with garlic, basil, rice wine, ginger, soy sauce and chili peppers.

Many people like eating fresh clams as an appetizer with a class of white wine or yellow rice wine.

Taobao: wzqjl.taobao.com



Marinated fresh clams, 30 yuan per 500 grams

Photos by Wei Ying